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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SO](#) [ET](#)  
SUBJECT: SALAFIST INFLUENCE IN ETHIOPIA ON THE RISE  
ACCORDING TO SOMALI CLAN ELDER

Classified By: PAO ANTHONY FISHER FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) Summary: According to a Somali clan elder, the GOE should make efforts to ease tensions within the Muslim population of Ethiopia. He noted rising Salafist and pro-CIC sentiments among both Somali and non-Somali Muslims, and an increasing willingness by Ethiopian Muslim youth to fight on the side of the CIC in a Jihad declared against Ethiopia. According to this elder, Ethiopian Muslims are being recruited to support the CIC and oppose Ethiopia. He claims that many Ethiopian Muslims view a potential war in Somalia as a war against Ethiopia and the US. End Summary.

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SALAFISTS GAIN RECRUITS AMONG ETHIOPIAN MUSLIM YOUTH  
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¶2. (C) Mohammed Ogaz Hassan, (strictly protect) currently Somali clan leader of the Issas, sent his nephew Ahmed, a businessman living in Addis Ababa, to see the PAO with concerns regarding the increasing recruitment of Ethiopian Somali and non-Somali Muslim youth by the CIC. Ahmed said that the CIC have been using half-truths and distortions of the Quran to rally young Ethiopian Muslims to their cause. Young Muslims in the Merkato area of Addis Ababa, for example, according to Ahmed, are 'awaiting orders from the Islamic Courts in Mogadishu' to join with the CIC. Ahmed said that the CIC was using the 'same tactics as Al Qaeda' in reaching out to young Ethiopian Muslims, many of whom see a war in Somalia as a fight between the 'United States, allied with Ethiopia, against Islam.' Ahmed indicated that he was very surprised to see that many of the young Muslims who expressed a willingness to fight with the CIC in the jihad against Ethiopia did not speak the Somali language; for him this was proof that there were Salafist CIC advocates who had entered Addis Ababa and were actively recruiting adherents through interpreters.

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GOE SHOULD INDOCTRINATE ETHIOPIAN YOUTH  
ABOUT TRUE ISLAM  
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¶3. (C) Ahmed termed any war in Somalia as 'dangerous', because many young Ethiopian Muslims believed that 'it is a sacred war.' He appealed to the PAO to alert the GOE to exceedingly high anti-government sentiment among Muslim youth. Asked why Ethiopians would want to fight against their own country, Ahmed said that the youth 'just wanted a change, any change'. Many he said were also answering the call to 'defend Islam.' In conveying the sentiments of his uncle, he said that the GOE should use the moderate Islamic religious

authorities, along with the media, to tell young Muslims that America and Ethiopia are not against Muslims in the coming fight. Ahmed said that if the GOE acted quickly and credibly, it would be able to head off potential recruitment of young Muslims against Ethiopia.

¶4. (C) (Biographic Note) With the passing of his father, who was the clan elder, Mohammed Ogaz Hassan returned to Dire Dawa several years ago to assume his position as 'ogaz,' or clan leader of the Issas. Due to rising clashes between the Afars and the Issas, he was recently flown by GOE helicopter to Dire Dawa to help resolve the clan disputes. Hassan is well connected to the Djibouti government, the GOE and the Somali tribes throughout Ogaden, from Jijiga to Djibouti. End note).

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Comment  
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¶5. (C) Conversations by the PAO with other responsible Muslim Authorities, such as Sheik Elias Redman, head of Ethiopia's Islamic Supreme Council, reinforce the observations of Mohammed Ogaz Hassan, that there is an intensified effort by the Salafists to promote strife among Muslims and non-Muslims. Recent killings, forced conversions in Jimma and the circulation nationwide of a gruesome videotape of mutilated Christians, give credence to the concerns about rising Salafism in Ethiopia, a cause for grave concern.  
YAMAMOTO